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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION ONE OF TWO SAIGON 3269

AUG 11

REF: RABAT 610 Pol 14 Viets XR Pol 13-6 Viets

1. FOLLOWING EXCERPTS FROM SAIGON MISSION WEEKLIES COVERING PERIODS JULY 24-30 AND JULY 31-AUGUST 6 PROVIDE GENRAL BACKGROUND ON RECENT ELECTION DEVELOPMENTS. ADDITIONAL DETAILS WHICH MAY BE USEFUL IN DEALING WITH SPECIFIC PROBLEM BUDDHIST INSTITUTE BOYCOTT DECISION ARE:

A) EVEN LEADERS BUDDHIST INSTITUTE CLAIM NO MORE THAN 1.5 MILLION FOLLOWERS OUT OF TOTAL POPULATION 15 MILLION AND THIS FIGURE IS PROBABLY INFLATED. THERE ARE SEVERAL OTHER BUDDHIST

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ORGANIZATIONS SUCH AS GENERAL BUDDHIST ASSOCIATION AND THERAVADA BUDDHISTS WHICH HAVE MADE CLEAR THEIR DISAGREEMENT WITH BUDDHIST INSTITUTE OVER BOYCOTT ISUSE.
B) MISSION DOES NOT BELIEVE MORE THAN SMALL PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL NUMBER FOLLOWERS INSTITUTE WILL ACTUALLY BOYCOTT ELECTIONS. NATION-WIDE VOTER REGISTRATION PROCESS WILL BE COMPLETED ONLY ON AUGUST 20, BUT PRELIMINARY FIGURE ON NUMBER VOTERS WHO HAVE REGISTERED FOR SEPT. 19, 1966 ELECTIONS IS 4,937,923. IT IS EXPECTED TO GO OVER 5 MILLION MARK. TOTAL NUMBER REGISTERED VOTERS FOR MAY 1965 PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS WAS 4,693,371. BUDDHIST INSTITUTE PARTICIPATED ACTIVELY IN THESE ELECTIONS. REGISTRATION FOR BOTH ELECTIONS IS CARRIED OUT BY PROVINCE SO HERE IS VALID BASIS FOR COMPARISON.

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C) IT IS TOO EARLY ESTIMATE PRECISELY WHAT IMPACT BUDDHIST INSTITUTE AND VIET CONG CAMPAIGNS AGAINST SEPT. 11 ELECTIONS WILL HAVE ON NUMBER PERSONS WHO ACTUALLY VOTE. THUS FAR IT SEEMS TO HAVE HAD LITTLE IMPACT ON REGISTRATION.
D) SHOULD ALSO BE NOTED THAT OF OVER SIX HUNDRED CANDIDATES WHO ARE STANDING FOR ELECTION MAJORITY ARE AT LEAST NOMINAL BUDDHISTS.

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2. JULY 24-30.

A) ELECTORAL PROCESS REMAINED DOMINANT POLITICAL ACTIVITY AS INITIAL SCREENING OF CANDIDATES AT LOCAL LEVEL WAS COMPLETED AND MAJOR GVN EFFORT TO PUBLICIZE AND PREPARE FOR ELECTIONS, THEMSELVES, WAS BEGUN. AFTER REMAINING STALLED BY PREVIOUS LAME-DUCK MINISTER OF INFORMATION DINH TRINH CHINH, VIS MACHINERY WAS AT LAST OPERATING UNDER NEW MINISTER, GENERAL NGUYEN BAO TRI. USING LOUDSPEAKER TRUCKS AND OTHER MEDIA VIS SERVIES IN PROVINCES ARE EXHORTING POPULATION TO PARTICIPATE IN ELECTION. GENERAL THEME IS "IN COMMUNIST NORTH VIET NAM, NO ELECTIONS HAVE EVER BEEN HELD. IN SOUTH VIET NAM, THIS IS THIRD NATIONAL ELECTION AND PARTICIPATION OF EVERY VOTER IS IMPORTANT AND IMPERATIVE." RADIO AND TELEVISION CONTINUED TO STRESS ELECTIONS. PROVINCIAL AUTHORITIES MADE CLEAR IN CONVERSATIONS WITH AMERICAN OFFICIALS THAT THEY INTENDED WORK FOR MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION. TOP LEVEL CONFERENCE TO REVIEW ELECTION PLANS WAS SCHEDULED FOR AUGUST 1-3 IN SAIGON FOR PROVINCE

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 3269/1 C O N F I D E N T I A L
CHIEFS, DEPUTY PROVINCE CHIEFS FOR ADMINISTRATION, AND PROVINCE VIS CHIEFS, AT WHICH PRIME MINISTER, MINISTER OF INFORMATION, MINISTER FOR SECURITY AND MINISTER FOR REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT (AND ADMINISTRATIVE AFFAIRS) WOULD BE PRESENT.
B) ON BAIS OF PRELIMINARY REPORTS FROM I CORPS. IV CORPS, GIA DINH PROVINCE AND SAIGON CITY (73 OF

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108 SEATS TO BE CONTESTED) IT APPAEARED THERE WOULD BE OVER 420 CANDIDATES, OR SIX PER SEAT, REMAINING AFTER COMPLETION OF SCREENING PROCESS AT LOCAL AND CENTRAL LEVELS. BREAKING THESE CANDIDATES DOWN BY PROFESSIONS, ANALYSIS REVEALS THAT LARGEST GROUPINGS ARE: BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL MEN (OVER 100), TEACHERS/PROFESSORS (ABOUT 70), CITY AND PROVINCE COUCIL MEMBERS (ABOUT 60), CIVIL SERVANTS (ABOUT 60), AND MILITARY (ABOUT 40), THE HIGHEST RATIO OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONAL MEN IS NATURALLY FOUND IN SAIGON/GIA DINH METROPOLITAN AREA, WHILE IN PROVINCES, WHERE THERE ARE FEWER POLITICALLY-CONCERNED PRIVATE CITIZENS, RATIO OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND MILITARY MEN TREND TO INCREASE. BOTH IN PROVINCES AND METROPOLITAN AREAS THERE WAS HIGH DEGREE OF INTEREST AMONG COUNCIL MEMBERS AND TEACHERS/PROFESSORS.

C) THERE WAS LITTLE IDENTIFIABLE AFFILIATION WITH POLITICAL PARTIES OUTSIDE OF I CORPS, WHERE APPROXIMATELY ONE-THIRD OF LISTS OF CANDIDATES HAS RECOGNIZABLE CONNECTIONS WITH VNQDD AND THERE ARE ALSO SEVERAL DAI VIET LISTS. IN IV CORPS THERE ARE, AS ANTICIPATED, QUITE A FEW HOA HAO CANDIDATES (ABOUT 25), BUT BUDDHISTS, CATHOLIC AND THERAVADA BUDDHIST CANDIDATES ARE ALMOST EQUAL IN NUMBER (ALTHOUGH WITHOUT STRONG SENSE OF ORGANIZATIONAL DISCIPLINE WHICH INBUES HOA HAO). BASED ON OVERALL ANALYSIS OF THE SOME 420 CANDIDATES ON WHICH PRELIMINARY REPORTS ARE AVAILABLE. IT DOES NOT APPEAR THAT RELIGION IS LIKELY TO BE MAJOR FACTOR SINCE DISTRIBUTION IS FAIRLY EQUAL. (THIS IS CONSONANT WITH RAW INFORMATION JUST OBTAINED FROM II CORPS WHICH SHOWS FAIRLY EVEN BALANCE BETWEEN CATHOLIC AND BUDDHIST CANDIDATES.) REGIONAL BACKGROUND (NORTH, CENTRAL, SOUTH) APPAEARS TOBE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EITHER PARTY OR RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION. IN IV CORPS ALMOST ALL CANDIDATES ARE OF SOUTH VIETNAMESE ORIGIN, IN SAIGON AND GIA DINH MANY OF LISTS HAVE DISTINCTLY REGIONAL FLAVOR WITH SEVERAL BEING COMPOSED EXCLUSIVELY OF CANDIDATES FROM SAME REGION.

3. JULY 31-AUGUST 6.

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-4- SECTION ONE OF TWO SAIGON 3269, AUGUST 11

A) GVN KICKED OFF MAJOR CAMPAIGN TO ENSURE MAXIMUM PARTICIPATION AND HONESTY IN ELECTIONS WITH THREE-DAY SEMINAR AUGUST 1-3 FOR ALL PROVINCE OFFICIALS WHO WILL HAVE ELECTION RESPONSIBILITIES. PRIME MINISTER KY GAVE OPENING ADDRESS STRESSING IMPORTANCE OF ELECTIONS FOR VIET NAM, BOTH INTERNALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY:

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CALLING FOR WIDEST POSSIBLE PARTICIPATION, AND INSTRUCTING THAT ADEQUATE SECURITY BE PROVIDED FOR VOTERS AND CANDIDATES. BOTH IN HIS PUBLIC SPEECH ANDIN LATER PRIVATE WORKING SESSIONS, wY IS REPORTED TO HAVE HAMMERED AWAY AT NEED FOR FAIR AND FREE ELECTIONS. DECREES GOVERNING ELECTIONS MUST BE STRICTLY APPLIED, INCLUDING THOSE DESIGNED TO ENSURE THAT NO COMMUNISTS OR PRO-COMMUNIST NEUTRALISTS CAN PRESENT SELVES AS CANDIDATES. MINISTER OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT (AND CIVIAL ADMINISTRATION) THANG, MINISTER OF SECURITY VIEN AND MINISTER OF INFORMATION TRI ALL PARTICIPATED IN SEMINAR WITH THANG SERVING AS CHAIRMAN. INFORMATION CADRE FROM PROVINCES STAYED OVER FOR ADDITIONAL TWO DAYS TO RECEIVE FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS ON PUBLICIZING ELECTIONS AND PROCEDURES OF ASSISTING ALL CANDIDATES ON EQUAL BASIS IN PUBLICIZING THEIR CANDIDACIES. SEMINAR CLOSED WITH UNANIMOUS ADOPTION OF THREE-POINT RESOLUTION: (1) DETERMINED TO PREPARE AND ORGANIZE LEGAL, ABSOLUTELY FAIR AND FREE ELCTIONS OF CONSTIUENT ASSEMBLY; (2) DETERMINED TO ENCOURAGE PEOPLE TO ENTHUSIASTICALLY CARRY OUT DEMOCRATIC DUTY OF VOTING WITH DISCRIMINATION FOR THEIR REPRESENTATIVES; AND (3) DETERMINED TO ELIMINATE FROM RANKS OF REPRESENTATIVES THOSE WHO WORK DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY FOR COMMUNISTS. SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATIONS WITH PROVINCE CHIEFS AND OTHER GVN OFFICIALS AT PROVINCE LEVEL INDICATES THAT THEY ARE TAKING SERIOUSLY RESOLUTION AND INJUNCTIONS OF PRIME MINISTER wY AND OTHER MINISTERS.
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USIA B) FINAL SCREENING FOR CANDIDATES WAS VIRTUALLY CON-
NSC CLUDED DURING REPORTING PERIOD WITH FINAL POSTING OF
INR CANDIDATES TO BE MADE ON AUGUST 12. ACCORDING TO MINISTER
CIA OF REVOLUTIONARY DEVELOPMENT, THERE WERE 716 CANDIDATES
NSA AND ALTERNATES FOR 108 SEATS DIRECTLY CONTESTED PRIOR TO
DOD COMMENCEMENT SCREENING PROCESS, WITH TOTAL OF 80
NIC PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES AND ALTERNATES WHO EITHER WITH-
ACDA DREW OR WERE RULED OUT OF LOCAL SCREENING BOARDS FOR
AID VARIOUS IRREGULARITIES. FORTY-TWO APPEAL WERE SENT TO
CENTRAL ELECTION REVIEW COUNCIL, 23 FROM LOCAL BOARDS AND
19 BY INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES. REPORTEDLY 23 OF THESE
CASES WERE CLEARED BY CENTRAL COUNCIL, INCLUDING 12
RSR WHICH HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY REJECTED BY LOCAL BOARDS.
EIGHTEEN CASES WERE RULED INELIGIBLE, WHILE ONE CANDIDATE
VOLUNTARILY WITHDREW FROM RACE. WE HAVE IMPRESSION,
BASED UPON CONSIDERABLE INFORMATION FROMBOTH LOCAL
BOARDS AND CENTRAL COUNCIL, THAT SCREENING PROCESS
CONTAINED REMARKABLY FEW IRREGULARITIES AND WAS
GENERALLY CONDUCTED WITH INTEGRITY IN ACCORDANCE
WITH APPLICABLE DECREES AND REGULATIONS. MONTAGNARD
CANDIDATES MUST SUBMIT NAMES PRIOR TO AUGUST 15
ACCORDING TO SPECIAL DECREE WITH FIXED PROCEDURES
FOR THEIR INDRECT ELECTIONS. PRELIMINARY REPORTS IN-
DICATE THAT THERE WILL BE SEVERAL CANDIDATES WHO HAVE
RESPECT OF MONTAGNARDS AND ARE NOT CONSIDERED TO BE UNDER
GVN INFLUENCE FOR WHAT WILL BE FIRST NATIONAL ELECTION
IN WHICH MONTAGNARDS HAVE BEEN ALLOWED PARTICIPATE.
C) ALTHOUGH THERE HAS BEEN SOME CONCERN OVER LATE
START BY MINISTRY OF INFORMATION IN PUBLICIZING ELECTIONS,
REPORTS FROM RURAL AREAS AS WELL AS CITIES SHOW THAT VIS (RPT VIS)
IS BEING FULLY MOBILIZED FOR TASK. ELECTION SONGS

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HAVE BEEN COMPOSED AND RECORDED; POSTERS AND BANNERS PREPARED AND DISPLAYED COUNTRY-WIDE; RADIO AND TV PROGRAMS COMPLETED AND BROADCASTING BEGUN LOUDSPAKER TRUCKS IN ACTION; LOCAL SEMINARS HELD. THERE IS REPORTED TO BE CONSIDERABLE DEGREE OF PUBLIC CONSCIOUSNESS OF FACT OF ELECTIONS, EXCEPT IN MORE REMOTE VILLAGES AND HAMLETS WHERE GVN EFFORTS WILL NECESSARILY BE SLOWER TO REACH. HOWEVER, AT THIS STAGE THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF PRECISELY WHAT ELECTIONS ARE FOR OR WHO CANDIDATES WILL BE. LACK OF UNDERSTANDING SHOULD BEGIN TO DISAPPEAR GRADULLY AS GVN PUBLICITY EFFORT CONTINUES, AND MORE RAPIDLY ONE TWO-WEEK PERIOD OF ACTUAL CAMPAGINING BY CANDIDATES OPENS ON AUGUST 26.

D) PROBLEM IS COMPLICATED BY CONTINUED OPPOSITION FROM BUDDHIST INSTITUTE WHICH HAS RESTATED ITS UNWILLINGNESS PARTICIPATE IN ELECTIONS UNDER PRESENT ARRANGEMENTSS. SOME OF INSTITUTE LEADERS HAVE APPARENTLY BEEN RESPONSIBLE FOR LEAFLETS CALLING FOR ELECTION BOYCOTTS WHICH HAVE BEGUN TO APPEAR AT VARIOUS PLACES THROUGHOUT COUNTRY.
6) ANOTHER OBSTACLE IS THAT OF DETERMINED VIET CONG OPPOSITION WHICH HAS EMERGED CLEARLY DURING PAST TWO WEEKS. SEVERAL REPORTS OF VC CADRE THREATENING VILLAGERS WITH VIOLENT REPRISALS SHOULD THEY VOTE HAVE BEEN RECEIVED FROM SCATTERED LOCALITIES. CAPTURED DOCUMENTS HAVE REVEALED THIS TO BE VIET CONG INTENTION; AND RADIO HANOI AND "LIBERATION RADIO" HAVE BEEN DELIVERING STRONG PROPAGANDA ATTACKS AGAINST ELECTIONS. THIS IS IN CONTRAST TO PROVINCIAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS OF MAY 1965 WHICH VIET CONG DID NOT OPPOSE. GVN IS WORKING TO COUNTER BOTH BUDDHIST INSTITUTE AND VIET CONT ANTI-ELECTION CAMPAIGNS BY COMBINATION OF PRO-ELECTION PROPAGANDA: MAJOR ORGANIZATIONAL EFFORT INVOLVING PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES, TEACHERS, STUDENTS ETC., AND PROVISION OF SECURITY TO VOTERS AND CANDIDATES. INCREASE IN HEAT AND EXCITMENT OF ELCTION PROCESS ONCE CAMPAIGN ACTUALLY BEGINS SHOULD ALSO PROVIDE MAJOR INJECTION OF ENTHUSIASM.

F) GVN HAS INDICATED ITS DESIRE TO HAVE SEPT 11 ELECTIONS OBSERVED BY LOCAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS AND VIETNAMESE AND FOREIGN PRESS. PRIME MINISTER KY IN HIS SPEECH TO ELECTION SEMINAR SAID THAT THERE WOULD BE FOREIGN OBSERVERS PRESENT AND SPECIFICALLY INVITED FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS TO "GO INTO THE PROVINCES AND OBSERVE THE VOTING". LODGE
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1. AS DEPARTMENT WILL RECALL, NGO DINH DIEM REGIME ENCOURAGED LARGE VOTER TURN-OUT BY THREATENING BUREAUCRATIC PENALITIES TO THOSE CITIZENS WHO FAILED TO VOTE AND THUS DID NOT POSSESS A CANCELLED VOTER'S CARD. MEMORY OF THIS PRACTICE IS STILL GREEN IN THE PROVINCES, WHICH PROBABLY EXPLAINS TO SOME EXTENT IMPRESSIVE VOTER TOTAL ROLLED UP IN PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL COUNCIL ELECTIONS OF MAY 1965.

2. TO DATE WE HAVE RECEIVED NO RPT NO INDICATION THAT GVN, AS MATTER OF POLICY, HAS ISSUED SIMILAR THREAT. THIS DOES NOT MEAN, HOWEVER, THAT SOME OVER-ZEALOUS LOCAL OFFICIALS HAVE NOT SUGGESTED POSSIBILITY IN THEIR AREAS OF CONTROL. ELECTIONS ARE GROWING IN IMPORTANCE WITH EACH PASSING DAY, AND PRESSURE ON

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LOCAL OFFICIALS TO HAVE GOOD TURNOUTS IN THEIR AREAS GROWS WITH IT. REPORTS THAT LOCAL OFFICIALS MIGHT BE SUGGESTING SUCH THREATS PROBABLE SOURCE ON WHICH APPLE DREW FOR HIS STORY REFERRED TO IN REFTEL.

3. DIFFICULT TO SEE WHAT CAN BE DONE TO COUNTER SUCH REPORTS AS APPLE'S. GVN CANNOT VERY WELL ISSUE COMMUNIQUE STATING THAT NO ONE IS BEING COMPELLED TO VOTE. THIS WOULD ONLY DRAW ATTENTION TO REPORT, INSPIRE A FURTHER RASH OF STORIES AND QUITE POSSIBLY LOWER THE TOTAL VOTE. AFTER ALL, ESSENTIAL POINT IS

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THAT VOTERS ARE BEING GIVEN CHOICE OF CANDIDATES AND BEING PERMITTED TO VOTE SECRETLY. THUS, IF THEY ARE UNWILLING TO PARTICIPATE ON GROUNDS OF PRINCIPLE, THEY CAN INVALIDATE THEIR VOTES IN PRIVACY OF POLLING PLACE.

4. REGARDING OTHER QUESTION RAISED REFTEL CONCERNING "NEGATIVE SPECULATIONS ATTRIBUTED TO 'CIVILIAN POLITICIANS'," WE CAN ONLY COMMENT THAT ON ANY GIVEN DAY A REPORTER CAN GENERATE WHATEVER OPINION HE WANTS FROM SAIGON'S SALON POLITICIANS. IT CAN BE AS UPBEAT OR AS NEGATIVE AS REQUIRED FOR THE PURPOSES OF HIS STORY. LODGE
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 3353

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SUBJ: CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTION

1. FINAL OFFICIAL LIST OF CANDIDATES FOR CA ELECTION, ISSUED ON SCHEDULE AUGUST 12 BY SPECIAL COMMISSARIAT OF INTERIOR, SHOWS TOTAL OF 542 CANDIDATES FOR 108 VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN SEATS SUBJECT TO DIRECT ELECTION OR AN AVERAGE OF ALMOST PRECISELY FIVE PER SEAT. THERE ARE 141 LISTS WITH 401 CANDIDATES (FOR 77 SEATS).

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2. BREAKDOWN OF CANDIDATES BY AREA IS AS FOLLOWS:

SAIGON (16 SEATS): 23 LISTS; WITH 120 CANDIDATES.

GIA DINH (10 SEATS): 14 LISTS, WITH 70 CANDIDATES.

I CORPS (17 SEATS): 3 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES (FOR ONE SEAT) AND 25 LISTS WITH 69 CANDIDATES (FOR 16 SEATS).

II CORPS (20 SEATS): 35 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES (FOR 10 SEATS) AND 14 LISTS WITH 34 CANDIDATES (FOR 10 SEATS).

III CORPS (15 SEATS): 38 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES (FOR 8 SEATS) AND 15 LISTS WITH 36 CANDIDATES (FOR 7 SEATS).

IV CORPS (30 SEATS): 65 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES (FOR 12 SEATS), INCLUDING 17 KHMER CANDIDATES (FOR 4 SEATS), AND 30 LISTS WITH 72 CANDIDATES (FOR 18 SEATS).

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3. COMMENT: AS DEPT. WILL APPRECIATE, COLLECTION OF RELIABLE INFORMATION IS MAJOR PROBLEM BOTH FOR GVN AND FOR US. FURTHERMORE, SPECIAL COMMISSARIAT (FORMERLY MINISTRY) OF INTERIOR NOT ALWAYS ACCURATE IN TABULATING DATA AVAILABLE TO IT. FOR EXAMPLE, MINISTRY ANNOUNCED IMMEDIATELY AFTER JULY 11 (ORIGINAL FILING DEADLINE) THAT THERE WERE 157 LISTS IN MULTI-MEMBER CONSTITUENCIES AND 170

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INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES, AS REPORTED EMBTELS 818 AND 888. SUBSEQUENT ANALYSIS OF MINISTRY'S OWN FIGURES SHOWS THAT IN FACT THERE WERE AT LEAST 164 LISTS WITH 568 CANDIDATES AND APPROXIMATELY 167 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES, FOR A TOTAL OF 735 (PLUS MORE THAN 100 ALTERNATES).

4. FIELD HAD SHRUNK CONSIDERABLY BY EXTENEDED DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF DOSSIERS AND PAYMENT OF FEES, JULY 14. THIS ATTRITION WAS MOST DRAMATIC IN SAIGON, WHERE 39 LISTS (204 CANDIDATES) HAD ANNOUNCED INTENT TO RUN BUT ONLY 26 LISTS (135 CANDIDATES) ACTUALLY COMPLETED REGISTRATION AND ENTERED SCREENING PROCESS (EMBTEL 1014). SAME SHRINKAGE OCCURRED TO LESSER EXTENT NATION-WIDE, PRESUMABLY AS CANDIDATES ASSESSED PROSPECTS AND DECIDED THEY STOOD LITTLE CHANCE. THUS APPROXIMATLEY 630 OR 640 PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES (INCLUDING ABOUT 175 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES AND PERHAPS 145 LISTS WITH 465 CANDIDATES) AND AYWHERE FROM 85 TO 105 ALTERNATES ENTERED SCREENING PROCESS AT PROVINCIAL AND MUNICIPAL LEVEL. (WE CANNOT BE MORE PRECISE BECAUSE WE DO NOT KNOW DATES ON WHICH INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES ON

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LISTS DROPPED OUT). SUPPOSEDLY-PRECISE FIGURES CITED BY GENERAL THANG (WHO MEANWHILE HAD TAKEN MINISTRY OF INTERIOR UNDER HIS JURISDICTION WITH ITS TITLE REDUCED TO SPECIAL COMMISSARIST) IN CLOSING SPEECH AT ELECTION SEMINAR AUGUST 3 (AS REPORTED EMBTEL 2707, PARA 2-B) WERE: 629 PRINCIPAL RPT PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES (133 RUNNING AS INDIVIDUALS AND 496 RUNNING ON 248 - -SIC- -LISTS) AND 87 ALTERNATES, FOR TOTAL OF 716. THANG'S TOTAL OF 629 PRINCIPAL CANDIDATES WAS PROBABLY ACCURATE, BUT HIS BREAKDWON BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL AND LISTS WAS NOT AND

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PROBABLY MEANS THAT ORIGIANAL ERRORS BY INTERIOR WERE SIMPLY PERPETUATED AND THAT NEW ONES HAD CREPT IN. HIS TOTAL NUMBER OF LISTS, 248 IS SO GROSS AN ERROR THAT IT IS PROBABLY TYPOGRAPHICAL (BY VIET-NAM PRESS); 148 LISTS WAS PROBABLY THE FIGURE INTENDED, AND IF SO IT WAS REASONABLY ACCURATE.

5. THE NET CHANGE WITH WHICH WE ARE CONCERNED IS THEREFORE THE DROP FROM APPROXIMATELY 629 (THANG'S FIGURE) TO 542, SINCE THE NUMBER OF ALTERNATES IS NOW UNIMPORTANT.

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6. OUR TABULATION OF WITHDRAWALS, EXCLUSIONS AT PROVINCIAL/MUNICIPAL LEVEL, AND REINSTATEMENTS (STARTING FROM A HIGHER BASE THAN THANG'S FIGURE OF 629) SHOWS THAT 15 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES AND 8 LISTS WITH TOTAL OF 20 CANDIDATES WITHDREW DURING THE PERIOD FROM APPROXIMATELY JULY 22 (START OF PROVINCIAL SCREENING) THROUGH AUGUST 11: A TOTAL OF 35 CANDIDATES WITHDRAWN. IN PROVINCIAL SCREENING 24 INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES AND 18 LISTS WITH 54 CANDIDATES WERE DISQUALIFIED, OR TOTAL 78 CANDIDATES. (SIX INDIVIDUAL CANDIDATES AND SIX LISTS WITH 17 CANDIDATES EXCLUDED FOR POLITICAL REASONS: TWO INDIVIDUALS AND THREE LISTS WITH 8 CANDIDATES EXCLUDED FOR IMPROPER MILITARY STATUS, DISMISSAL FOR CAUSE FROM CIVIL SERVICE, CRIMINAL CONVICTION, ETC., AND 16 INDIVIDUALS AND 9 LISTS WITH 29 CANDIDATES EXCLUDED FOR TECHNICAL REASONS). CENTRAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL REINSTATED 6 INDIVIDUALS (2 POLITICAL, 1 MILITARY STATUS, 1 CRIMINAL RECORD, AND 2 TECHNICAL CASES) AND FOUR LISTS WITH 13 CANDIDATES (1 POLITICAL CASE INVOLVING 4 CANDIDATES AND 3 TECHNICAL CASES INVOLVING 13 CANDIDATES). THUS NET DISQUALIFICATIONS

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WERE 18 INDIVIDUALS (4 FOR POLITICAL REASONS AND 14 FOR TECHNICAL REASONS) AND 14 LISTS WITH 41 CANDIDATES (5 LISTS WITH 13 CANDIDATES FOR POLITICAL REAONS; 3 LISTS WITH 8 CANDIDATES FOR MILITARY/CIVIL SERVICE/CRIMINAL REASONS; AND 6 LISTS WITH 20 CANDIDATES FOR TECHNICAL REASONS. TOTAL WITHDRAWALS, 35 CANDIDATES

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AND NET DISQUALIFICATIONS, 59 CANDIDATES, MORE THAN COVERS THE ATTRITION OF 87. NAMES BETWEEN THANG'S AUGUST 3 FIGURE AND TODAY'S OFFICIAL FIGURE (KEEPING IN MIND WE STARTED FROM FIGURE HIGHER THAN THANG'S 629).

7. SHOULD BE NOTED THAT TOTAL OF POLITICAL DIS-QUALIFICATIONS AND REINSTATEMENTS GIVEN ABOVE DOES NOT ACCORD WITH TWELVE POLITICAL CASES BEFORE CENTRAL ELECTORAL COUNCIL REPORTED EMBTEL 3268 BECAUSE 1) NOT ALL CANDIDATES OR LISTS EXCLUDED ON POLITICAL GROUNDS APPEALED THEIR DISQUALIFICATIONS AND 2) SOME "POLITICAL" COMPLAINTS DEALT WITH BY CENTRAL COUNCIL WERE INITIATED BY CANDIDATES OR AUTHORITIES AGAINST OTHER CANDIDATES WHO HAD PASSED PROVINCIAL SCREENING.

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BT NOTE: PASSED S/S-O, WHITE HOUSE, DOD, CIA, USIA, NSA AT 10:45 AM 8/12/66

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